

**Remarks**

Applicants thank the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 12-31 are now present in this application. Claims 12 and 24 are independent. Claims 1-11 have been cancelled. Claims 12-31 have been added.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

**Claim Objections**

The Examiner objected to claim 9 for an informality. Applicants have cancelled claims 1-11 in favor of added claims 12-31. It is respectfully asserted that added claims 12-31 are clear and definite.

**Claim Rejections**

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shwed et al. in view of Lidinsky and Aziz et al. Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Shwed et al. in view of Lidinsky et al. and Aziz et al. and further in view of Kirby et al. Claims 3-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shwed et al. in view of Lidinsky et al. and Aziz et al. and further in view of Wesinger, Jr. et al. Claims 6 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shwed et al. in view of Aziz et al. Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shwed et al. in view of Aziz et al. and further in view of Wesinger, Jr. et al. Claims 10 and 11 stand rejected under

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shwed et al. in view of Aziz et al. and further in view of Lidinsky et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1-11 have been cancelled. Therefore, these rejections have been rendered moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

### **Added Claims**

Applicants have added claims 12-31 for the Examiner's consideration. It is respectfully asserted that added claims 12-31 are similar in scope to the claims allowed in the parent application, now U.S. Patent No. 6,226,748.

It is respectfully asserted that the prior art of record fails to show or suggest a combination of method steps or structural features, as recited in independent claims 12 and 24.

With regard to independent claim 12, the prior art fails to show or suggest a combination of method steps "wherein said step of determining the packet manipulation rules includes the step of accessing a lookup table that maintains information identifying compression and encryption algorithms to be utilized for data packets sent between members of the virtual private network."

Regarding independent claim 24, it is respectfully asserted that the prior art of record fails to show or suggest a combination of structural features including circuitry and software which "forms a secure data packet by encrypting at least a payload portion of the data packet according to the identified encryption algorithm and by compressing at least the payload portion of the data packet according to the compression algorithm identified."

**Conclusion**

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

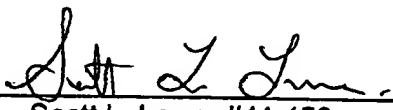
It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Mr. Scott L. Lowe (Reg. No. 41,458) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and further replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1602 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By   
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